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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the changing roles and relationships of schools, central offices, and university facilitators at 11 schools that implemented the nationally recognized Accelerated Schools process. The schools joined the Louisiana Accelerated Schools Network in the summer of 1994. The paper begins with an overview of the Accelerated Schools philosophy and process. It then details the history of the Louisiana Satellite Center, including a description of the original direct-service training model. Roles and responsibilities under the coaching model are described and a comparison of the two approaches is made. Data were collected from interviews with and surveys of 19 coaches. Findings indicate that in spite of the barriers identified by some coaches, the coaching model was very successful, largely due to the distribution of power across multiple roles. Securing commitment from teachers may be most easily accomplished by choosing coaches who are themselves respected teachers. Visible university facilitators and supportive principals also play key roles. It is recommended that coaches and project staff realistically assess the political climate of the school and district and develop a plan to gain commitment from actors at each level. Two figures are included. Contains 20 references. (LMI)

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Coaching versus Direct Service Models for University Training to Accelerated Schools

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Murphy (1991) proposes a model of school restructuring that includes changes in governance, the core technology of teaching and learning, and roles and relationships. Much has been written about school-level governance with emphasis on teacher empowerment. As Murphy concedes, teaching and learning have received scant attention in the restructuring literature. More often, authors document the more visible school changes such as implementation of school site councils. The need to refocus change at the classroom level has not gone unnoticed. The attention to powerful learning practices and constructivist approaches to curriculum and instruction in the Accelerated Schools movement, for example, are recent additions to that model that address this concern. The most noticeable changes in roles and relationships under conditions of restructuring occur at the school site. The principal's role has evolved away from that of instructional leader to that of facilitator of teachers' work. Teachers have assumed new roles in schoolwide governance. Less attention, however, has been paid to changes in relationships with other key players in reform movements. Particularly when schools adopt reform models, there is likely to be reordering of expectations, rights, and responsibilities of school personnel, central office, and external facilitators of the reform program.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the changing roles and relationships of schools, central offices, and university facilitators as 11 schools in Louisiana attempt to implement the nationally recognized Accelerated Schools process. These schools joined the Louisiana Accelerated Schools Network in Summer 1994. Two coaches per school, selected by the individual districts, received training from a university team. A member of the university staff served as facilitator to the coaches. This delivery model (university to district/coaches to schools) replaced a direct service (university to school) model that had been used for three prior years of school training in the state. The coaching model served two purposes: 1) it allowed for training by those most familiar with a school's history and context, and 2) it would eventually allow districts to launch additional accelerated schools on their own (i.e., through their trained coaches rather than through the university network).

The paper begins with an overview of the Accelerated Schools philosophy and process. It then details the history of the Louisiana Satellite Center, including a description of the original direct service training model. Roles and responsibilities under the coaching model are described and a comparison of the two approaches is made. Data collected from coaches and principals through interviews and questionnaires are used to answer the following research questions: 1) How do roles and relationships change under the coaching model? 2) What problems are encountered by coaches and schools as they attempt to implement the model? and 3) How can the process be improved for more effective school restructuring? The paper concludes with

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recommendations for university project personnel in assisting school districts in their formalized reform initiatives.

Background

The Accelerated Schools Process (ASP) is based upon Henry Levin's research on at-risk students (Hopfenberg & Levin, 1993). Levin's research represented an attempt to assess the extent and growth of the at-risk population, the educational outcomes for this group, the social and economic consequences for the nation, and the causes of the failure to bring these students into the educational mainstream.

Levin's (1987, 1988) findings indicated that the traditional approach to educating at-risk students is to remediate. The results of remediation, however, were that students who started behind their peers, fell further behind as they progressed through school. By sixth grade these students were two years behind their grade in achievement and over half failed to complete high school. If they managed to complete high school, they were performing at an eighth grade level. Levin also reported that the organization of schools, curriculum, and instructional strategies all contribute to reduced expectations, uninspiring school experiences, expectations of student failure, and an inability to draw upon the rich talents of teachers and students and the potential contributions of parents. Accelerated schools were designed to have precisely the opposite consequences.

Philosophy

The accelerated schools philosophy is premised on the tenet that if a school is not good enough for the children of the school staff, it is not good enough for any child. This is the standard toward which all Accelerated Schools strive, to create their own dream school which they would want for their own children (Brunner & Hopfenberg, 1992). Instead of viewing at-riskness as an internal trait, ASP offers a different definition--that of a child being in an at-risk situation. Children are placed in an at-risk situation when there is a mismatch between the resources and experiences they get at home and expectations they find at school. Since so many students enter school with a different set of skills and experiences than those on which the standard school curriculum is constructed, they are placed in at-risk situations (Hopfenberg & Levin, 1993). Accelerated schools have as their overall goal the elimination of this at-risk situation by bringing all students into the educational mainstream.

Guiding Principles

The transformation of a conventional school into an accelerated school proceeds around three guiding principles: establishment of a unity of purpose; creation of school site empowerment through decision making and responsibility for results; and development of an instructional approach that builds on the strengths of students, teachers, administrators, and parents. Through these principles, ASP communities work together and create a pedagogy which considers the total learning environment.

Unity of purpose refers to the development and pursuit of a unified vision among parents, teacher, support staff, students, school-site administrators, and central office administrators. This vision involves the creation of an organizational and instructional

framework required to transform the school into an accelerated one that will make students academically able at an early date so they can fully benefit from their schooling experiences and adult opportunities.

Empowerment with responsibility refers to the acknowledgment of parents, teachers, support staff, students, and administrators to take responsibility for educational decisions and outcomes. Among the areas that are most central for site-based participation in decisions are the choice of curriculum, instruction strategies, and personnel, and the ability to allocate and organize school-site resources (Levin & Hopfenberg, 1991). A healthy partnership between the school and the central office is essential to fostering this shared decision-making responsibility.

Building on strengths is a continual process of identifying and utilizing available human resources within the school and its community. Levin (1992a) reports that schools overlook the strengths of children in at-risk situations because they perceive these children as lacking the learning behaviors associated with conventional success in school. Accelerated schools actively look for opportunities to build upon the strengths of all students, parents, teachers, support staff, and community.

Brunner & Hopfenberg (1992) report the principles of ASP are supported by a set of values and beliefs which create a visible attitude that is necessary to develop the culture of achievement and human resource building. Equity, participation, communication, collaboration, community, reflection, experimentation, trust, risk-taking, and the school as the center for expertise are the values that orient all actions of an Accelerated School.

Governance

Accelerated schools are organized into a definite structure which ensures the optimal achievement of the school's vision and goals through total access, open participation, and a continual flow of information. They must, however, retain sufficient flexibility to facilitate periodic self-assessment and modification (Levin, 1991). These schools employ a tri-level governance model consisting of cadres, a steering committee, and the school as a whole (see Fig. 1).

Cadres are small working groups of teachers, support staff, and parents who meet weekly to address challenges and priority areas of the school's vision. Typical areas include school community relations, curriculum, school climate, discipline, and parental involvement.

The Steering Committee is the intermediate governing body of the school and consists of the principal and a representative from each cadre. Parents, students, and central office personnel may also be members of the steering committee. The purpose of this group is to coordinate the efforts of the various groups and to develop recommendations that will be presented to the school as a whole. All decisions concerning the school go to the steering committee.

The School as a whole is involved in the discussion and decision-making process. Consensus among members (teachers, parents, administrators) is essential, especially in decisions regarding the arenas of curriculum, instruction, and allocation of resources.

Powerful Learning Theory

Powerful learning is based on the premise that the education we use with gifted children works well for all children. Using this rationale, accelerated schools create situations where every day encompasses the best we know about teaching and learning (Levin, 1992b).

The second part of the powerful learning theory is that every learning experience consists of three interrelated dimensions. The first dimension is "what" is learned which includes the curriculum base. The second dimension is "how" the content is learned which includes instructional strategies . The third dimension is the context in which one organizes all available resources to achieve the what and how. The context includes the use of time, flexibility of the schedule, deployment of staffing, and funding. The three dimensions are totally and necessarily integrated. A change in what students learn almost always necessitates a change in how they learn and in the contexts that support that learning.

In summary, an accelerated school is not just a conventional school with compensatory or remedial classes grafted onto it. Rather, it is a vital environment in which the entire school and its operations are transformed. All students are treated as gifted. The stress is on the school as a whole rather than on a particular grade, curriculum, approach to teacher training, or other more limited strategy.

Process of Transformation

A comprehensive process has been established to transform traditional schools into accelerated ones. This transformation is more evolutionary than revolutionary. The required time estimated to make the transition from a conventional school to an accelerated one is six years (Hopfenberg, Levin, Meister & Rogers, 1990).

The primary focus of the Accelerated Schools process is placed on developing capacity by the school community to make important educational decisions that will create the best possible schools for all students. Accelerated Schools provide the members of the school community an opportunity to understand their existing school culture before they initiate changes (Finnan, 1993). Over a period of several months, the school community begins by taking a deep look into its present situation, and then forges a shared vision for its future that encompasses the views of all its members. By comparing the vision to the initial situation, the school community comes up with priority areas for action. Through the creation of accelerated governance structures and the practice of the inquiry process, Accelerated School communities work systematically toward reaching their vision.

University of New Orleans Accelerated Schools Satellite Center

The Accelerated Schools Satellite Center for Louisiana is located at the University of New Orleans (UNO) and is an affiliate of the National Center for Accelerated Schools at Stanford University, CA. Through a grant, funded by Chevron, USA, the University of New Orleans Center began providing technical assistance of the Accelerated Schools Process with a single pilot school located in the inner-city of New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1990. In the fall of 1991, eight new schools initiated the Accelerated Schools process as part of a statewide project funded by the Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). During this time, one

additional school also began the process; this school was funded by its local school district. Seven additional schools were initiated in the process in the fall, 1992, also funded by BESE. In 1994, 12 new accelerated schools were launched with 11 of them being funded by BESE and one funded by its local district. Currently, there are 28 schools representing 19 school districts in the Louisiana Accelerated Schools network.

The University of New Orleans Accelerated Schools Satellite Center provides initial training for school communities implementing the Accelerated Schools process and systematic technical assistance to all schools in the network. Additionally, the Satellite Center facilitates statewide meetings so that teachers, central office personnel, and parents can establish a support system and learn from each others' experiences in the transformation process. Semiannually, the Center also publishes a newsletter, highlighting the accomplishment of the schools.

The staff of the Satellite Center consists of four research associates, one project director, and 2.75 graduate assistants. Professional service contracts and additional compensation are used to provide additional support to the schools and the Satellite Center. Technical assistance and operating expenses are budgeted at approximately $12,500 per school site.

Direct Service Training Model

The UNO Accelerated Schools Satellite Center's training model originally had a three-stage design. Based on the model developed by the National Center for Accelerated Schools (Levin, 1993) and the UNO's Satellite Center's experiences with the original pilot school, the process of training and assisting schools with the implementation of the accelerated schools process was structured into three phases: 1) building capacity for educational change, 2) implementing, appropriate strategies for acceleration and 3) the assessment of impact data, such as test score gains, changes in roles of teachers and the decision making process, student discipline, parental and community involvement, and overall school climate.

During 1991-92, eight schools (identified as first year schools) were trained using the three-stage model. In 1992-93, six schools (identified as second year schools) were trained using the three-stage model. Training began with a five-day intensive summer program designed and conducted to introduce teachers and administrators to the Accelerated Schools Process. Evaluation (St. John et al., 1992) indicated that the summer training as a whole was well regarded. The teacher and administrator participants demonstrated a strong understanding of the principles of accelerated schools. They indicated some understanding of the taking-stock process. However, the training on the inquiry process was not grasped by the participants and the project team agreed that more training was needed in this area. After the summer training, technical assistance was provided to the pilot schools through frequent school site visits (on average, three times per month) and through the use of quarterly statewide staff development meetings.

An evaluation of the Louisiana Accelerated Schools Project (St. John & Dell, 1993) indicated that the schools nearing completion of the first year of the accelerated schools process had successfully completed the three first-year milestones of the project: 1) taking stock of the school (an intensive self examination of the school by the school community); 2) developing a vision for the school, which expresses type and quality of learning environment the school aspires to become; and 3) establishing priorities to guide the restructuring process. It appeared

that the first year schools had begun to build capacity to transform to the accelerated mode of schooling.

Schools in the second year of the accelerated schools process, St. John & Dell (1993) reported, began the difficult work of transforming dysfunctional patterns in the school and, more generally, building the capacity to accelerate the student learning process. The researchers concluded that the second year schools were beginning to make substantial organizational, instructional, and curricular changes necessary to become accelerated schools.

Although this evaluation of the Accelerated Schools Project in Louisiana did not specifically address effectiveness of the three stage training model, the favorable results suggested that goals one and two of the training model were achieved.

Expansion and Transition to Coaching Model

As a result of a rapid growth of requests from schools wishing to become accelerated schools in Louisiana, there was a need to develop a training model that could be efficiently managed, cost-effective and provide an effective training model for statewide expansion. With collaboration and training being provided by the National Center for Accelerated Schools, in the spring of 1994, the University of New Orleans Satellite Center developed a new training model, similar to the National Center for Accelerated Schools Coaches Model (Levin, 1993). This new approach described as the training of trainers or coaching model was designed to support growth and expansion of accelerated schools in Louisiana. The coaching model uses constructivist principles in which the values, ideas, and experiences are embedded in activities undertaken by trainees rather than through more traditional presentations. The goal of the coaching model is to build the capacity of other persons and school districts to help schools transform themselves into accelerated schools. Once these trainers have developed the capacity in these schools, they will train other schools in their geographical area in the accelerated schools philosophy and process.

The coaching model is considered an on-going process of capacity building. The training to become a coach consists of workshops, retreats, mentoring support by the UNO Satellite Center through site-visits, phone calls, and a continuous exchange of ideas and materials through the Louisiana Accelerated Schools statewide network. Major events of the coaching model are selection of coaches, coaches' orientation, initial six-day summer training, and two-day mid-year training.

Selection of Coaches. School districts statewide are sent application packets and asked to recommend prospective coaches for their school districts. These application packets contain questions that inquire about the district and coach's commitment to the Accelerated Schools Philosophy and central office support to the coach and pilot school. These applications are screened by the mentors at the UNO Satelliite Center and prospective coaches are selected. In year one of the application process, 11 school districts applied and all were accepted.

Orientation of Coaches. Shortly after the selection of coaches an orientation is conducted which provides coaches with a more in-depth understanding of the ASP process, the role of the coach, the role of the school district, and the role of the mentor and the UNO Accelerated Schools Satellite Center. The following describes these roles and responsibilities:

ROLE OF A COACH

The role of a coach includes, but is not limited to, the following responsibilities:

- o Collaborate with school district officials to identify a pilot school to launch the Accelerated Schools process.
- o Complete the accelerated schools coaches'summer workshop.
- o Develop a plan of action that sets the dates for the pilot school's initial and follow-up training sessions. New Accelerated Schools require a minimum of five (5) days throughout the school year for whole-school training and implementation of the process.
- o Develop a schedule for visiting the pilot school site at least one day each week.
- o Maintain on-going records and artifacts of the pilot school's implementation of the Accelerated Schools Process.
- o Attend all statewide accelerated schools training and meetings.

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

The role of the school district includes, but is not limited to, the following responsibilities:

- o Identify two (2) personnel to be trained by the UNO Center for Accelerated Schools.
- o Support the trainers by providing release time for weekly work in the pilot school and attendance at statewide training and meetings.
- o Support and nurture the pilot school as it implements the Accelerated Schools process.
- o Facilitate a district-wide (central office, school board, schools, and community) awareness of the Accelerated Schools process.
- o Recognize and support the pilot school's transformation into an Accelerated School (i.e., celebrating the milestones, vision, and special events).
- o Comply with BESE policy and procedures regarding the utilization of funds.

ROLE OF UNO CENTER FOR ACCELERATED SCHOOLS

The role of the Louisiana Center for Accelerated Schools includes, but is not limited to, the following responsibilities:

- o Screen applications to select and notify district trainers.
- o Collaborate and assist school districts in the selection of their pilot school sites.
- o Conduct five (5) full days of initial summer training for district trainers.
- o Schedule and provide two (2) full days of mid-year training for district trainers.
- o Collaborate and assist school districts in all levels of pilot school training.
- o Collaborate with district trainers on the use and development of all training materials.
- o Visit the district and pilot school sites at least one day each month.
- o Maintain regular telephone communication with district trainers.
- o Organize statewide meetings for school districts and pilot school communities.

- o Produce and disseminate the Louisiana Accelerated Schools Newsletter.
- o Design and share assessment and reflection materials.

Summer Training. The summer training consisted of six days of intensive activities built on a constructivist approach. There are two levels of information shared at this summer training: 1) the accelerated elementary and middle school philosophy, process, and practices, including lessons that we have learned on what works, and 2) how a trainer can assist school sites to build capacity to transform themselves into places where teachers, parents, students, support staff, administrators, the local community, and the district work collaboratively to achieve a shared vision using the accelerated schools philosophy and process. Coaches and university facilitators participated in the summer training for all six days. Additionally, principals were asked to participate for the first two days. During the training sessions, participants designed plans and activities for implementation in their pilot schools. The university staff did not distribute prepared training materials (as this would violate a constructivist approach), yet the participants left with agendas and activities that they had prepared.

Mid-Year Training. The mid-year training consisted of three days of activities. The purpose of this training was to reflect on strengths and challenges of the coaches' first semester experiences in implementing ASP and complete training in the last stages of the process (i.e., setting priorities, governance, and inquiry). Coaches and facilitators attended the mid-year training.

Evaluating the Coaching Delivery Model

One of the 12 first-year schools failed to send any coaches to the summer training session and was subsequently eliminated from participation. Nineteen coaches, representing 11 schools, attended summer training and 17 attended mid-year training. Two coaches were unable to attend the second training session due to unrest in their district over educational reform in general. They do, however, remain in the project.

A written evaluation of the summer training and open forums with coaches during the mid-year training were used to assess coaches' satisfaction with training and implementation to that point in their pilot schools. Evaluations were very positive after both training sessions. Participants reported feeling "very prepared" to implement the components of the process in their pilot schools. Crediting the constructivist approach, they rated the sessions as useful and enjoyable.

Shortly after mid-year training, coaches were asked to complete a questionnaire assessing their attitudes toward the coaching model. The questionnaire consisted of 1) background information, including number of training sessions and statewide meetings attended and how respondents had become involved in the accelerated schools process; 2) level of involvement in the school training; 3) perceptions of cooperation from other members of the school community, the central office, and the university facilitators; 4) barriers encountered in implementing the process; and 5) recommendations for refining the model. Seventeen coaches responded to the survey. Survey responses, together with summer training evaluation and mid-year discussions, provided the data used in assessing the coaching model.

While the results in general were quite positive and supported the decision to continue the coaching model, the data also suggested several areas for improvement. Four themes emerged from the data that may prove useful to project staff in refining the coaching model. These involve: 1) who should become a coach and how coaches are selected, 2) how time commitments are conveyed and negotiated, 3) how expertise is used to secure commitment, and 4) how authority is used to secure commitment.

Selection of Coaches

When asked why they felt they were selected by their districts to be coaches, the overwhelming majority of coaches responded that they were selected primarily because they were "willing" and "available." Particularly because districts were asked to nominate coaches who would commit to summer training, many coaches felt that they were the second or third choice because others were unwilling to give up a week of their summer vacations. Half of the coaches also felt that their reputations in the district as being "committed to change" led to their selection. Their own "expertise in staff development" or "managing groups" was considered in only three cases. Two perceived that they were selected because they were being "groomed" for future administrative or central office positions. It is unfortunate that the selection as a coach was perceived more as a responsibility for additional work rather than as an honor. In fact, coaches were being asked to assume new leadership roles in their districts, yet no one mentioned leadership skill as a reason for being selected. Although summer training was perceived as quite successful in securing coaches' commitment to the Accelerated Schools philosophy, the way in which coaches are selected deserves further consideration.

Districts were allowed considerable latitude in their choices of coaches. Unfortunately, the importance of the coaching role and the appropriateness of skills and personality were secondary to the functional task of choosing someone. Unintentionally, coaches were given the message that their selection was just a perfunctory step in a process and they happened to be available to fill the need. More attention to the symbolic and less to the structural (Bolman & Deal, 1991) is warranted in coach selection. As more schools experience success with the accelerated process, the competition for coaching positions may increase and coaching may be viewed as a privilege rather than an added responsibility. One suggestion for the immediate future is to have districts recommend more than one person per position and have applicants interview for the "privilege" of becoming a coach. Through this more deliberative process, prospective coaches would be aware that interpersonal skills, expertise in curriculum and instruction, and leadership potential (rather than mere availability) are primary considerations.

Another consideration in selection of coaches is their current position in the school system. Three coaches are school administrators (principal or assistant), four are central office supervisors, and ten are teachers. Eight hold regular positions in their pilot school. For the other 11 especially, balancing the demands of the regular position with the added responsibilities of the coach became a primary concern. The decision to assign two coaches per school was intended to reduce some of the time demand on coaches. The loss of three coaches, however, left three others without assistance.

Negotiating Time

When asked to identify the barriers they had experienced in their coaching roles, one in three coaches reported the conflict in trying to balance competing roles. Those who worked in other schools found difficulty in getting away from their home school to attend meetings or conduct training in the pilot school. Interestingly, coaches did not report that either preparation for training or required paperwork posed time constraints. This finding suggests that the constructivist approach to training of coaches, and particularly the allocation of time during training for coaches to prepare for their own presentations in their pilot schools, were successful approaches to this multi-stage delivery model. It was scheduling training rather than preparing for training that became burdensome for coaches. In fact, many coaches commented after their first training session that they learned from the university staff that presentations did not have to be "dog and pony shows" with every minute staged in advance. Instead, the work is constructed by participants as they learn. Thus, the burden associated with being a coach revolved primarily around finding the time to be at the pilot school. Even those teachers who worked in the pilot school lamented that they felt guilty taking so much time away from their classrooms.

Although coaches will continue to have to balance competing role expectations, one suggestion for helping in this area was to negotiate all schedules at the beginning of the school year. Coaches felt that they spent an inordinate amount of time simply scheduling meetings. They had to confirm dates, times, and places with their partner coach, the school staff, and the central office. Often this involved several calls to each site.

Coaches believed that university staff should be responsible for securing early commitment to training schedules. While that alternative may alleviate some of the immediate problems, it fails to position the coach for launching additional schools without external intervention. A related strategy might be to secure commitment to the amount of time needed for training. While all districts (usually the superintendent) signed contracts committing schools to five full days of training, turnover in the superintendency obliterated that commitment in some districts; union contracts limiting the number of staff meetings conflicted with the original commitment in others. In short, there was little consensus among central office personnel, coaches, or schools about the amount of time being committed to training or the amount of time that would later be spent in schoolwide decision making.

The number of people involved in or affected by the coaching model extends far beyond the district office. Clarifying the expectations of each at an early date might reduce the conflict experienced later. Coaches need to know the number of days they will be away at training and statewide meetings. While this was conveyed up front to district offices, many coaches learned of their commitment at the summer training session. The coach's regular-duty supervisor must be aware of the new assignment; ideally, the notice should come from the district office so that the coach does not need to continuously bargain for release time. The pilot school principal and staff should be given a complete, written set of expectations regarding time. They should openly discuss the feasibility of committing five days to training and weekly meetings to schoolwide planning. In the first year, most schools committed to training days but had only vague notions of the time investment in bottom-up school government. Finally, the superintendent must authorize the time commitment at all levels. Rather than pre-specifying exact dates and times for all meetings, university project personnel might develop a prototypical calendar beginning

with summer training and extending through two years. It would include all expectations for coaches, principals, and teachers.

Cultivating Commitment to Accelerated Schooling

Levels of authority. Commitment to the process of accelerated schooling grew at varying rates across participants. While commitment is secured in writing from superintendents and school staff before training begins, this tacit agreement can quickly disintegrate when schedules are being stretched, contractual restrictions on time overlooked, and tension over new roles mounting.

Commitment to the change process appears to be directly influenced by the level of support from those in positions of authority. As is so often the case, the principal as the "person in the middle" appears to be the most crucial link in securing commitment from the staff and keeping alive initial commitment from the central office. Coaches whose principals participated in summer training and expressed early commitment to accelerated schools experienced fewer barriers in working with school staffs. Able to coordinate all schedules and activities with the pilot school staff, these coaches were buffered from any dealings with the district office.

Coaches in three pilot schools, however, reported lack of commitment or "surface" commitment from their pilot school principals. This necessitated considerably greater negotiations with their central offices. Principals subtly obstructed the ability of coaches to call meetings and work with the school staff. One principal was quoted as saying, "You're the coach. Make sure everything gets done;" another goaded, "Do it and get it over with." In these cases, coaches had to be careful to clear all decisions with the central office which increased the burden on the coach. Not unexpectedly, teachers in these schools were more likely to withhold judgment about the new process until they understood whether the principal would allow it to continue. Although principals were never explicitly and openly negative, their failure to support the process verbally was criticized by coaches. Indeed, Arends (1988) reported that school change is directly related to level of administrative support, with verbal support a key indicator.

Central office supervisors were viewed as neither supportive nor unsupportive of the coaches' change efforts. Typically, they "allowed exploration as long as it didn't interfere with other duties." In one case, one in which a coach was a central office supervisor, the district was perceived as supportive, allowing considerable flexibility in scheduling. In another, the district was perceived as not having "bought into the process." Most commonly, district offices distanced themselves from implementation of the model. Where the principal was supportive, s/he was able to assist the coach in negotiating with central office. For example, teachers in one unionized district agreed to schedule a four-hour after-school meeting to work on their vision statement. They would have been protected by contract if they had refused to schedule the meeting. The principal informally petitioned her central office supervisor to grant the teachers a half-day release on their next records day. This unsolicited reward for their work seemed to the coach and facilitator to be a turning point in that staff's commitment to accelerated schools.

Levels of expertise. A second element associated with degree of success in working with pilot schools was the perception of the coach as expert. Coaches whose home school was also their pilot school confronted fewer problems in securing staff commitment. These coaches felt that they had already earned respect among their peers. Coaches new to the pilot schools had

to establish themselves as experts. About half of these coaches reported that their faculties were tentative about committing to the process. "They don't know me yet," explained one. "They're not quite committed, but they're coming around," said another. For the most part, teachers were perceived as cautiously optimistic. Only in four cases did coaches report any degree of teacher skepticism.

Coaches felt less secure in dealing with central offices. Here they felt that they had neither the power of position nor expertise. Some coaches recommended that university facilitators and, especially, the Satellite Center director, should become more active in negotiating with district offices. They perceived that superintendents and their staffs would attribute greater credibility in school restructuring to university personnel than to teacher/coaches.

Power as a Framework for Understanding the Coaching Role

The variety of roles held by the 19 coaches afforded us an excellent opportunity to study how new forms of leadership emerge and are viewed in schools and school systems. While the restructuring literature argues for emergent leadership, the politics of schools often impede some actors in taking leadership roles. Further, the level of acceptance and respect for any one position varies across the school system. While a teacher, for example, may be perceived as expert by other teachers, s/he lacks the legitimate (or position) power that may be necessary to negotiate changes in schedules and regulations decreed by the central office. University project personnel, on the other hand, are often viewed as experts by district personnel, yet have greater difficulty than insiders in understanding and changing the day-to-day expectations and activities of teachers. One unanticipated yet inherent advantage of the coaching model is that it places more than one person at more than one level in leadership positions. Thus, the distribution of power at multiple levels can garner acceptance for the project.

French and Raven (1959) identified five bases of social power. Hersey and Natemeyer (1979) expanded these to seven: reward power, coercive power, legitimate power, connection power, referent power, information power, and expert power. Stimson and Appelbaum (1988) distinguished power of the position from power of the person. Position power emanates from authority (also called legitimate power), connections, and the ability to dispense rewards and punishments. Personal power comes from expertise, information, and respect. In restructuring settings, power is claimed to be a shared resource. Yet perceptions of who has power vary according to the perceiver. "Empowering" teachers may mean sharing decision authority (legitimate power), increasing their knowledge (expert power), or linking them to others in authority (connection power).

Restructuring itself is premised on the assumption that teachers have the greatest expertise in the core technology of schooling (Murphy, 1991). Stimson and Appelbaum (1988) found that teachers were most satisfied with their work when they perceived their principals as using personal rather than positional power. Thus, teachers may be most influenced by personal power and are most likely to see the source of power in other teachers as expertise, a personal power base. Coaches who are or have recently been classroom teachers would appear to be in the most advantageous position to influence other teachers. Thus, securing commitment from teachers may be most easily accomplished by choosing coaches who are themselves respected teachers.

Because of their centrality in the organization, principals hold connection power that may be vital to effective change efforts, particularly when the change is introduced from external sources. Principals hold legitimate power and, often, expert power, with their staffs. This can mitigate against the expert power of the coach. As we have seen, principals who did not verbally support the new process had staffs who were less committal. The principal's support is necessary to connect external facilitators to school staffs and, in cases where the coach is an employee of the same school, the principal can interfere in the facilitator's relationship with the coach. When the principal is non-supportive, the expert power of the coach, the legitimate power of the district, and the connection and expert power of the external facilitators must be mobilized to secure staff commitment.

As external agents, university facilitators hold no legitimate power in individual schools. Their ability to work with school staffs will depend largely on the degree of expertise they convey and their ability to establish legitimacy through the school or district administration. District-level administrators have position power over the principal and staff as well as the authority to continue or halt the project. The sanction of the district may be particularly crucial for principal support. Kirby, Paradise, and Protti (1992) found that when faced with difficult decisions, principals are most likely to do what they believe their district supervisors would expect. Thus, the importance of the relationship between the district and the project staff cannot be minimized. As several coaches told us, there is a need for greater visibility of the project administrators. At the district level, they are perceived as the experts. At the school level, they symbolize expertise as well as connection to authority.

Figure 2 depicts the complex interrelationships that develop in a school-district-university partnership. What we have learned from our analysis of the coaching model is that attention must be given to each dyad. Due to the political complexity of school organizations, empowerment is not easily accomplished. Who has power for whom and about what varies across districts, schools, and roles. To trust that the process itself will gradually win the commitment of all involved is naive at best. Implementation has to <u>begin</u> before the merits of the process can be realized. Thus, we recommend that coaches and project staff realistically assess the political climate of the school and district and develop a plan to gain commitment from actors at each level. Where district support is secure, facilitators might work more closely with the school administration. Where principals are supportive, their role in promoting the project should be encouraged and expanded. Where opposition at any level is apparent, actors who hold influence for individuals at that level should be more proactive.

In spite of the barriers identified by some coaches, the coaching model has been remarkably successful. Implementation of the process has proceeded as anticipate with most schools completing the taking stock, vision, and inquiry phases. We attribute this success in large measure to the distribution of power (expertise, authority, etc.) across multiple roles. The selection and cooptation of respected and talented in-district practitioners greatly facilitated school commitment.

Although initial implementation requires selling the message, ultimately, we contend, power lies in the process. Indeed there is already evidence that relationships within schools are changing. For example, teachers at one school reluctantly committed to participate during the summer of 1994. Only after lengthy discussions and open resistance did the majority sign on. The principal was absent for the first two training sessions for the school staff. Primarily

through the patient prodding of one coach who was also an administrator in the district, the principal learned more of the process and was persuaded to attend a statewide meeting. Teachers who had not wanted to participate became more involved once she became more active. After three months, she began to bargain for her teachers with the district office and became very active in the inquiry process. Teachers also noticed changes in their relationships. As one teacher noted after an intensive session developing a school vision, "This process really can work. Mrs. ___ and I wouldn't even be in the same room last year. Now we've actually become friends...,we have a lot in common. We respect one another."

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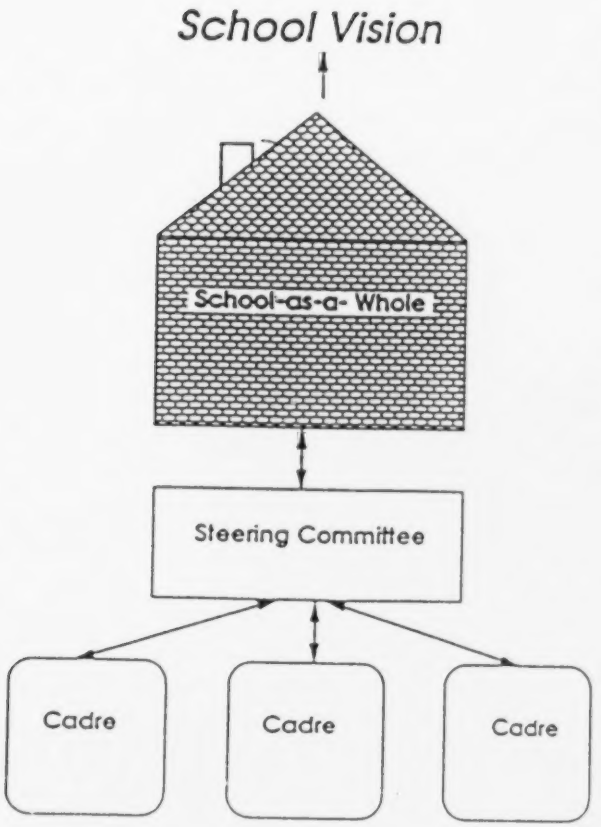

Fig. 1. Accelerated Schools governance model

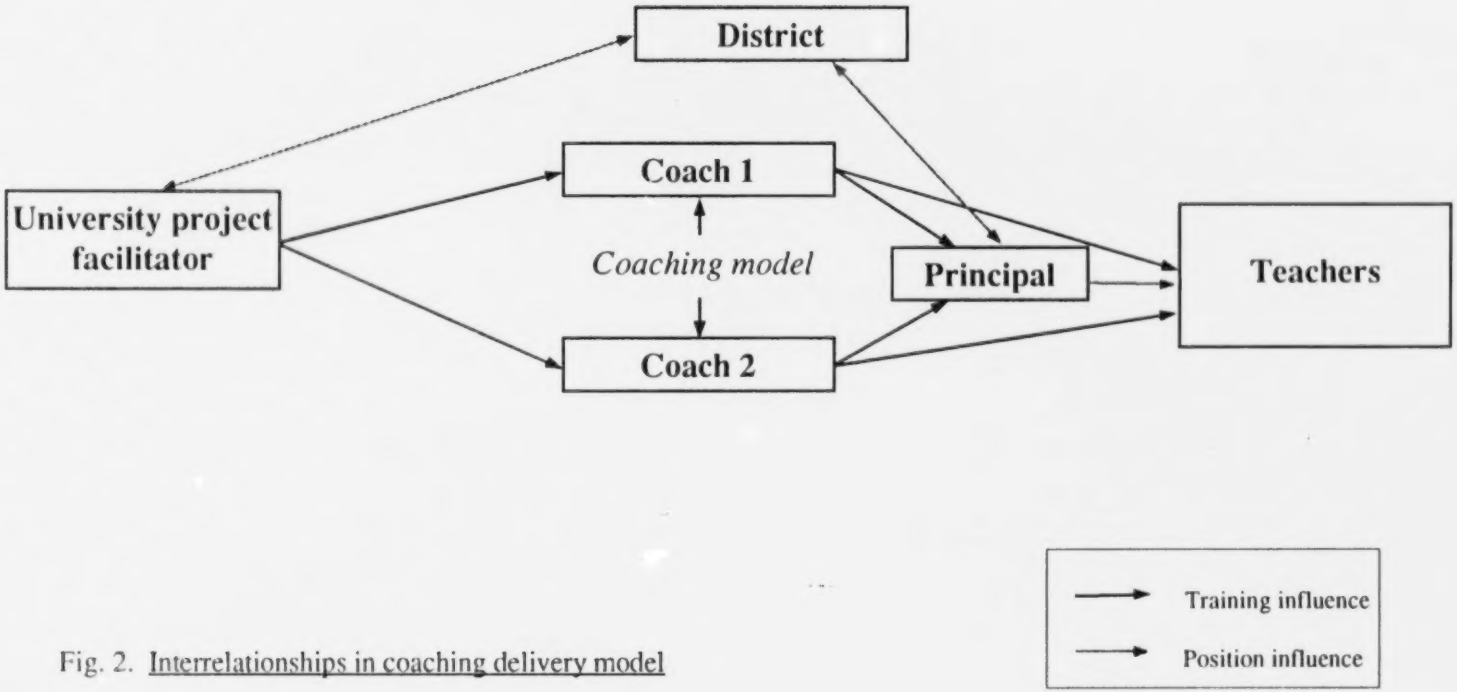

Fig. 2. Interrelationships in coaching delivery model